DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 346 323 CE 061 413

AUTHOR Hillman, Jan; Moore, Deby
TITLE Project READ's Handbook Documenting a Coalition's Strategic Planning Process.
INSTITUTION Project READ, Dayton, OH.
SPONS AGENCY Ohio State Dept. of Education, Columbus.
PUB DATE Jun 92
NOTE 69p.; A Cooperative Services Model Project.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; *Adult Literacy; Advisory Committees; *Educational Planning; *Literacy Education; *Master Plans; Meetings; *Organizational Objectives; Policy Formation
IDENTIFIERS 353 Project; Coalitions; *Project READ OH; *Strategic Planning

ABSTRACT

Based on a case study of Project READ (Reading Education for Adults in Dayton), this handbook presents a strategic planning model for use by nonprofit groups. Its emphasis is on developing strategic cooperative plans. The handbook is organized in three main sections. The first section describes Project READ, its history, personnel and funding, operations, goals, and current activities. Throughout the section, lessons from Project READ's experience are drawn and planning objectives are suggested. The second section is an overview of the strategic planning process. It includes a description of the process, a model, reasons for strategic planning, benefits of planning, factors that characterize successful strategic planning, use of a facilitator, planning committees, and getting started. The third section is a detailed description of Project READ's strategic planning process. Ten appendixes include the following: four references; lists of Project READ coalition members, planning committee members, and advisory committee members; Project READ's strategic plan; and a resource list of eight publications. (KC)

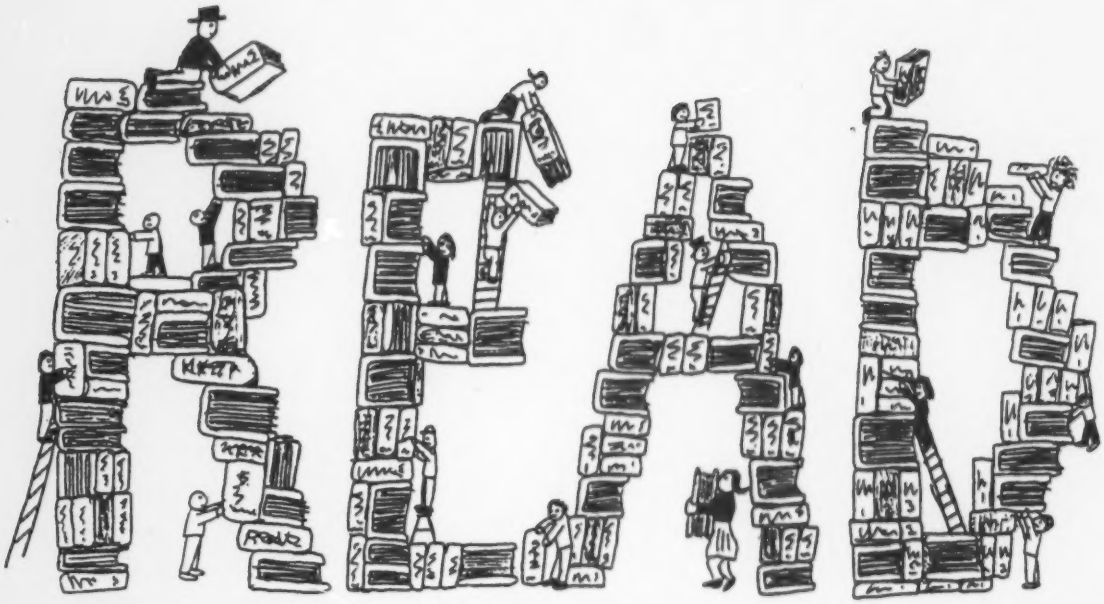
****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED346323

Project READ's

Handbook Documenting A Coalition's

Strategic Planning Process



A Cooperative Services Model Project

Funded by the Ohio Department of Education

June 1992

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Ohio Dept of Education

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CE061413

Project READ's

Handbook Documenting A Coalition's

Strategic Planning Process

FUNDING SOURCE

Funds for producing and distributing this handbook were provided by the Ohio Department of Education under Section 353 of the Adult Education Act, P.L. 100-27 as amended. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Ohio Department of Education nor the U.S. Department of Education, and no endorsement should be inferred.

Cover Art
Brian Short

Technical Writers
Jan Hillman and Deby Moore
Hillman Associates

Editors
Rosalind Bertolo and Karla Hibbert-Jones
Project READ

June 1992

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword (Written by George Kirk, J.D.) i

Preface/Purpose of Handbook ii

Acknowledgment iii

I. Project READ
- A. Project READ's History....1
- B. Project READ's Personnel and Funding....1
- C. Project READ's Operations....2
- D. The Goals of Project READ....2
- E. Project READ's Current Activities....3

II. Overview of Strategic Planning Process
- A. Description of the Planning Process....4
- B. A Planning Model....4
- C. Readiness and Reasons to Plan Strategically....5
- D. Benefits of Strategic Planning....6
- E. Factors that Characterize Successful Strategic Planning....7
- F. Strategic Planning Facilitator....8
- G. Planning Committee....9
- H. Getting Started....9

III. Detailed Description of Project READ's Strategic Planning Process
- A. Agreeing to Engage in Strategic Planning....11
- B. Clarifying the Organization's Mission and Values....13
- C. Assessing the External and Internal Environment....18
- D. Identifying the Strategic Issues Facing an Organization....21
- E. Formulating Strategies to Manage the Issues....27
- F. Establishing a Vision for the Future....29

IV. Appendix
- A. Bibliography
- B. Project READ Coalition Members
- C. Project READ Planning Committee Members
- D. Advisory Committee for this Project
- E. Project READ's Organizational Chart
- F. Ohio Literacy Coalitions
- G. Challenges Faced by All Coalitions
- H. Task Group Members
- I. Task Group Assignments
- J. Summaries of Task Group Reports
- K. Project READ's Strategic Plan
- L. Resource List

FORWARD

I have a close friend and colleague who maintains that each organization has a strategy, even though it may not engage in strategic planning. If an organization has not deliberately developed a strategy through a planning process, it has deferred to the strategy of meeting events of the unknown future on a daily basis with little or no awareness of the long-term impact of its actions.

Strategic planning in not-for-profit agencies is not fundamentally different than what has been done in business, government and military settings. It requires an understanding of the generic elements of the process and the ability to apply them to organizations in different circumstances. Being able to identify the character of the organization and the elements of its existence is essential. The process should be flexible, and selectively applied to the idiosyncracies of the organization and its environmental circumstances.

Considerable interaction and dialog are generally needed to understand the character of the organization and assess the situation, even among those who are active in the organization. Consequently, it may require alot of time and effort before things begin to materialize. Patience and persistence are needed by all.

For the individuals involved, it is a challenge to understand the process and its application to their organization. Once they see strategic planning as a way of thinking rather than a mere process, they will use that way of thinking in most every aspect of their personal lives. This personal benefit to participants is well worth the time and effort to acquire it.

The facilitator also benefits by learning new information about the organization and by receiving the satisfaction of seeing the organization take on new character and new potentials. My experience with Project READ was one of the most enjoyable and rewarding in recent years. Members of the committee, the board, the task groups and the staff were super persons to work with and were very responsive to my guidance. I congratulate Project READ for what it has accomplished in its short years of existence, and for the way it has developed strategies to guide its future efforts.

For organizations that may be considering Strategic Planning I will share this thought. A note written by an uncle to his niece in her high school yearbook said, "Whatever you want to be, be a good one." As an organization, strategic thinking can help you rethink what you want to be, and how to be better at it than you were in the past.

Good luck, and my best wishes for your perpetual success.

George E. Kirk

PREFACE/PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

The purpose of this handbook is to present a strategic planning model as well as a step-by-step case study. It is intended for use by literacy practitioners and coalitions, and other non-profit groups. The handbook presents formal strategic planning in an informal format to encourage practitioner use of the handbook.

The planning model presented can be adapted to any organization, however, the handbook's emphasis is to assist coalitions of any type and size to develop strategic cooperative plans. The case study examines how a Dayton, Ohio literacy coalition, Project READ, implemented a planning model. The handbook also includes a description of Project READ and six other Ohio literacy coalitions. Please refer to Appendix F for a summary of Ohio Literacy Coalitions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The completion of this book would not have been possible without the tireless contributions of many people. However, the guidance and knowledge of George Kirk, J.D., made this planning process possible.

Project READ gratefully acknowledges the time, expertise and commitment shared by Dr. Kirk.

I. PROJECT READ

A. Project READ's History

Project READ (Reading Education for Adults in Dayton), evolved from Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS), a massive public service effort started in 1986 by the American Broadcasting System (ABC) and the Public Broadcasting System (PBS). The organization made the decision to become a forum for literacy providers serving adults. It became incorporated as "Project READ" in 1988 in Dayton, Ohio. Since July 1990, the project has been located at Sinclair Community College in downtown Dayton, Ohio. Sinclair serves as the fiscal agent for Project READ.

PLUS
PROJECT LITERACY U.S.
abc PBS

PROJECT
R·E·A·D

In its formative years, Project READ created the Dayton Mayor's Commission on Adult Literacy to engage business, political and public sector leaders in literacy efforts. The Commission worked closely with Project READ to set priorities and strategies. Based on these priorities, Project READ began to assume an expanded role coordinating literacy information, resources and marketing. With the help of local organizations and the Mayor's Commission, Project READ installed a telephone referral service at the local United Way and produced a brochure listing all literacy providers in the area.

B. Project READ's Personnel and Funding

The coalition was located in the public library and operated by volunteers from 1986 to 1990. In July 1990, Project READ hired a full-time executive director, Karla Hibbert-Jones. The executive director's responsibilities include managing day-to-day activities, fund raising, supporting committee efforts, and providing direction for the coalition. The program also employs a part-time employee as administrative assistant/Helpline operator and utilizes the services of volunteers. Project READ is supported through a collaboration of literacy partners, including Sinclair Community College, foundations such as the Dayton Foundation, and corporate donors. Please refer to Appendix E for Project READ's Organizational Chart.

C. Project READ's Operations

Project READ is a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing the literacy levels of adults in the Dayton area. Project READ believes that everyone -- schools, volunteers, government, civic organizations, businesses, churches and students -- joining forces, can effectively increase the literacy levels and enhance the lives of undereducated adults.

The Board of Directors for Project READ is comprised of representatives of twenty-five organizations which are direct providers or promoters of literacy services.

The Project READ Coalition is comprised of the Project READ Board of Directors and a variety of other organizations and individuals concerned with adult literacy. These include organizations which serve "at-risk" populations who are often in need of literacy services. (Project READ Coalition members are listed in Appendix B.)

D. The Goals of Project READ

Project READ's goals are to:

Strengthen the efforts of organizations which provide literacy services.

Increase public awareness and concern for the scope and impact of illiteracy.

Mobilize community resources to enhance literacy efforts.

E. Project READ's Current Activities

Through collaboration, Project READ has consolidated what were once fragmented services for learners into an organized network. The network is expanding the capacity of literacy programs in the Dayton area through cooperative efforts, such as the ones described in the chart below.

Project READ Activities

PROVIDING A FORUM FOR LITERACY PROVIDERS to coordinate their efforts to deliver the highest quality services at the lowest costs.

IMPLEMENTING A FIVE YEAR PLAN for collaborative literacy efforts.

PUBLICIZING EXISTING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES for tutors and instructors.

ESTABLISHING A TRAINING CENTER for instructors and volunteers in southwest Ohio.

INFORMING COALITION MEMBERS OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS that affect local literacy efforts.

DISSEMINATING INFORMATION about the importance and costs of literacy education.

COORDINATING the Dayton Mayor's Commission on Adult Literacy.

WORKING WITH BUSINESSES TO INCREASE EMPLOYEES' AWARENESS of the educational opportunities available to under-educated adults.

OPERATING A HELPLINE SERVICE to connect beginning readers with classes in their neighborhoods, and volunteers with community literacy efforts.

FACILITATING REFERRALS to literacy providers from the county's JOBS program (Job Opportunities and Basic Skills, the education and training component of the 1988 Family Support Act).

COORDINATING EFFORTS to expand the number of computer-assisted training sites for literacy instruction.

PROVIDING A FREE LEARNING STYLE ASSESSMENT for adults with reading problems.

PRODUCING A VIDEO TO EDUCATE THE COMMUNITY about literacy efforts in the Dayton area.

PLANNING A ONE DAY SUMMIT on literacy and multicultural issues for instructors, volunteers, employers and community leaders.

PRODUCING AND DISTRIBUTING A DIRECTORY of literacy resources for community groups and social service agencies.

II. OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

A. Description of the Planning Process

The strategic planning process described in this handbook has been and is currently being utilized by Project READ, a non-profit coalition of literacy organizations in Dayton, Ohio. The planning method presented is generic and incorporates major approaches that can be adapted in different circumstances by public and non-profit organizations throughout the country.

The model was developed by George Kirk, J.D., a management consultant and professor at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. Dr. Kirk has over twenty years experience facilitating the planning process for non-profit organizations.

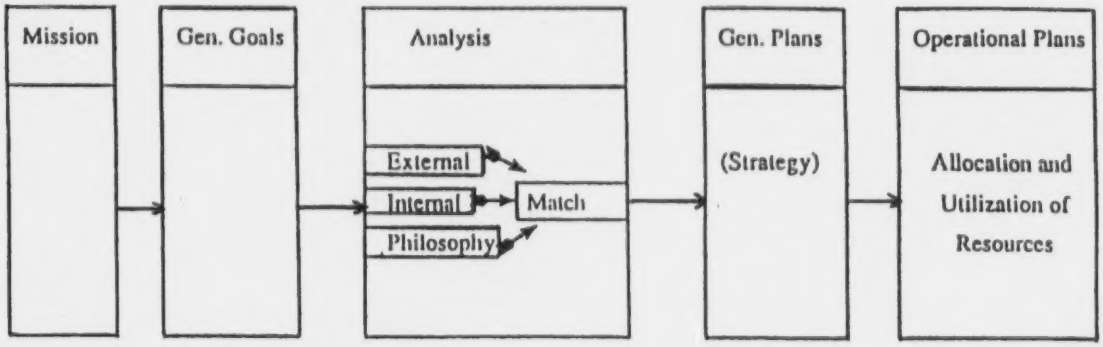
The techniques used in Dr. Kirk's model are based on numerous books and other sources of material regarding strategic planning including John Bryson's book Strategic Management for Non-Profit Organizations. John Bryson is an Associate Professor of Planning and Public Affairs at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, and Associate Director, Strategic Management Research Center at the University of Minnesota.

Other resources consulted during Project READ's initial planning process include: Strategic Management Concepts by Fred Davis and The Non-Profit Board Book: Strategies for Organizational Success by Independent Community Consultants, Inc. Both support the basic approaches to planning presented in this handbook.

B. A Planning Model

1. Agreeing to engage in strategic planning, and making a commitment to the time and effort it requires.
2. Clarifying organization's mission and values.
3. Assessing the external and internal environment.
4. Identifying the strategic issues facing an organization.
5. Formulating strategies to manage the issues.
6. Establishing a vision for the future.

A PLANNING MODEL



C. Readiness and Reasons to Plan

Is strategic planning for your organization?

Don't engage in planning if:

> Your organization is undergoing a major crisis or reorganization that might interfere with any long range commitment.
>
> Key decision makers are not willing to participate in the process and commit needed skills and resources; they probably will not accept the results.
>
> Planning committee participants are not willing to commit at least 5% of their time for a year.
>
> Organization does not have a clear cut decision making process because it's unlikely that you will make good decisions.

Reasons to Plan

The reasons to enter into the strategic planning process may be summed up as responses to internal or external circumstances. The reasons that people in organizations choose to plan strategically vary dramatically. In some cases, strategic planning is initiated because the process was dictated by a funding agency or governing board, or as a response to problems, typically organizational weaknesses or threats. On the other hand, the organization may be doing very well, but may want to improve.

Whatever the reasons, they must be compelling and garner the support of those who will be planning participants.

Planning closes the gap between the reality of today and the prospects for the future.

D. Benefits of Strategic Planning

Strategic planners such as Bryson (1986, 1987, and 1989) and others cite the following potential benefits of strategic planning:

- Develop effective strategies and action plans.
- Establish priorities.
- Create a basis for decision making.
- Clarify future activities.
- Establish control in those areas that can be controlled.
- Solve major organizational problems.
- Improve performance.
- Prepare for quickly changing circumstances.
- Increase teamwork and expertise.

Realistically, all (or even most) of the above benefits may not be achieved if the process does not have the characteristics of successful strategic planning.

"Skating where I think the puck will be."

- Wayne Gretzky

Wayne Gretzky attributed his great success to his perception of how to best play the game. In a similar way, strategic planning helps move the organization toward what is perceived to be the central point of action at some future point in time.

E. Factors That Characterize Successfull Strategic Planning

In addition to compelling reasons to begin planning and the readiness factors described above, the following factors are important to the success of strategic planning:

Leaders and decision makers encourage the process.

The process is tailored to and driven by the needs of the organization.

A good facilitator.

Time commitments for participants, allowing adequate time to reach consensus.

Attention and commitment from key leaders throughout and subsequent to the process.

Plenty of time to keep entire board informed and reach consensus.

F. Strategic Planning Facilitator

A strategic planning facilitator is a planning expert who works with the organization to conduct and enable the strategic planning process. The facilitator needs to have a working knowledge about the organization before initiating the planning process. The knowledge that the facilitator will need includes reasons that the organization has chosen to plan; organizational structure, governance, and history. It is important that the facilitator be from outside the organization so that a neutral position is maintained. The facilitator needs strong group process and communication skills.

The facilitator will be responsible for training the planning committee regarding the strategic planning process, providing group process monitoring and assuring that the process remains unobstructed.

A facilitator may be chosen through advertisement or through seeking recommendations from those organizations who have completed a planning process. It is important that decision makers agree that the facilitator has those skills necessary to conduct a successful facilitation.

Project READ was able to obtain a strategic planning consultant/ facilitator, George Kirk, J.D., through MAP, the Management Assistance Program. MAP, a United Way of the Dayton Area program, referred Dr. Kirk to Project READ on a non-fee basis. Dr. Kirk developed a strategic planning model that was adopted by the United Way of the Greater Dayton area. The model, called STAR (Strategic Thinking for Agency Renewal) is based on techniques described in John Bryson's book, Strategic Management for Non-Profit Organizations. (A detailed description of the strategic planning process utilized by Project READ and facilitated by George Kirk may be found beginning on page 10.)

Most United Way agencies in major cities have a Voluntary Action Center (VAC) or a Management Assistance Program (MAP) that may help your organization find a planning consultant.

> You have to set the tone and pace, define objectives and strategies, demonstrate through personal example what you expect from others.
>
> - Stanley C. Gault

G. Planning Committee

The planning committee serves as a coordinating group for the planning process. The responsibilities of the planning committee include consultation, negotiation, problem solving and advising.

The size of the planning committee may vary with organizational size. It is recommended that the committee size range from five to seven individuals. Key constituents should be represented including leaders, outside resource individuals and representation from stakeholder groups. The primary criteria when considering a person as a committee member is his/her ability to engage in individual broad vision thinking.

Individuals may be added as the need arises. However, it is difficult to retire troublesome or non-productive members. Additionally, if the committee becomes too large the process becomes unmanageable and unproductive.

A list of Project READ's planning committee members may be found in Appendix C.

H. Getting Started

Every strategic planning effort is in effect a story. The story must have all the ingredients: the correct setting, plots and subplots, actors, scenes, a beginning, a middle and conclusion, and interpretation (Hostager and Bryson, 1986).

The first step in the planning process is to develop, among the key decision makers, an initial agreement about the overall effort they are about to embrace, strategic planning.

As referenced by Bryson, 1986, the following steps in the process of reaching an initial agreement include:

- Introducing the concept of strategic planning.
- Developing an understanding of what it can mean in practice.
- Thinking through some of its more important implications.
- Developing a commitment to strategic planning.
- Reaching an actual agreement.

PROJECT READ'S STRATEGIC PLANNING STEPS TIMEFRAMES AND INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED

Timeframe	Steps	Individuals Involved*
Apr. 1990- Nov. 1990	Agreed on and prepared for strategic planning	Coalition
Dec. 1990	Initiated planning process at retreat	Coalition
Dec. 1990- Feb. 1990	Clarified mission and definitions	Planning Committee Coalition
Feb. 1990	Stakeholder analysis	Planning Committee Coalition
Mar. 1990	Formed task groups	Coalition
Apr. 1991- May 1991	Assessed external & internal environment	Planning Committee Coalition Task Groups
June 1991- Aug. 1991	Identified strategic issues	Planning Committee Coalition
Sept. 1991- Nov. 1991	Formulated strategies	Planning Committee Coalition
Nov. 1991- Dec. 1991	Prioritized issues	Coalition
Jan. 1992	Finalized Strategic Plan	Coalition
Feb. 1992	Developed action steps and timelines	Standing Committees/ Coalition
Mar. 1992- Ongoing	Implemented action steps	Standing Committees/ Coalition
Ongoing	Scheduled review of planning process	Planning Committee

* The facilitator was involved in each step through January 1992.

III. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT READ'S PLANNING PROCESS

A. Agreeing to Engage in Strategic Planning

Project READ members explored strategic planning issues at several monthly meetings. We discussed the following issues and questions:

1. Mission Statement
   a. Who are Project READ's members?
   b. Where do the members want to go?
   c. What is the role of the coalition in addressing the mission?
   d. How does the role of the coalition differ from the role of the providers?

2. Goals and Objectives
   a. What are Project READ's goals and objectives?
   b. Do the goals and objectives fit together and make sense?
   c. Are the goals and objectives obtainable?

3. Geographic Service Area
   a. What is Project READ's service area?
   b. How should Project READ interact with other providers/coalitions?

4. Services and Programs
   a. Are there services to consider adding or deleting?
   b. What services should a coordinating office provide?

5. Public Relations
   a. What type of image does Project READ have?
   b. Is the current image the one the members want to project?
   c. What are Project READ's relationship to different sectors of the community?

6. Fund Raising
   a. What budget is needed to meet Project READ's goals?
   b. What are the current and potential sources of revenue?
   c. Is a diverse funding base needed?

7. Board of Directors and Membership
   a. Will Project READ be able to meet coalition goals with the current member number, composition, tenure and activity level?
   b. What criteria will be used to determine eligibility for board membership?

Members also discussed their expectations. In the beginning of the planning process, if you asked several Project READ members about the purpose of their organization, you would get several different answers. Members expected the planning process to allow them to "sing from the same hymn book."

Expectations of Planning

Planning will:

Give members of the organization a shared sense of direction.

Make it possible to control the organization's direction.

Avoid wasting effort and money.

Help the organization be flexible and move quickly when new opportunities arise.

Encourage more people to become involved with the organization.

B. Clarifying the Organization's Mission and Values

Project READ Board members participated in a planning retreat. Here, members shared their perceptions about four essential questions:

Four essential questions:

1. What do we want to be?
2. What do we have the opportunity to be?
3. What do we have the ability to be?
4. Will the result be worth the time, effort and resources necessary to develop a successful planning process?

Coalitions form because individuals cannot achieve what they want individually, but can achieve their goals as a group of individuals with a common interest. The coalition's common concern, literacy, is the bonding agent.

Due to the nature of coalitions, Project READ members are called upon to wear two hats: one as a provider and one as a statesperson of literacy concerns of the entire community.

At the Project READ planning retreat, small groups discussed the following questions to identify Project READ's mission.

Who are we?

Who needs us?

Why are we needed?

What services do we provide?

What is our geographic territory?

What limitations or constraints do we place on ourself?

What self perception do we have? What do we want?

What image do we want the public to hold about who we are and what we do?

How else do we want to describe ourself?

Mission was described as that which defines an organization's "reason for being" now and into the future and as a vision of what an organization is or is striving to become.

Three basic elements of the mission:

1. Who? Client groups.
2. What? Client functions, products or services.
3. How? Activities, technologies and methods.

We discussed a concept called strategic thrust, which is the focus of the organization. If an organization has a broad focus, it is active in many different areas. An organization with a narrow focus concentrates on just a few interrelated areas at one time. The broader the focus, the slower the progress the organization makes in reaching its goals. We decided to begin with a narrow focus that can be expanded as the coalition's needs require.

STRATEGIC THRUST

Depends on the breadth of programs and the degree of program integration

Source: George Kirk, Facilitator

The Planning Committee

Project READ's Planning Committee agreed to meet frequently. Initially, the board agreed that the committee would meet twice a month, however, the committee actually met once a month. It was agreed the meetings would last from two to three hours and committee members would work on tasks between meetings.

We decided that the Planning Committee should not have decision making powers. It was important for the committee to keep the entire coalition informed of each step, therefore, on a monthly basis, the coalition discussed, revised and approved the committee's recommendations.

The Planning Committee consisted of seven members of the Project READ board and a chairperson. The consultant facilitated the meetings and Project READ's Executive Director took part as an ex-officio member.

The initial task for the committee members was the examination of Project READ's stated mission. A mission statement describes the coalition's members and purpose, including clients served, geographic service area, and services and skills needed to deliver services.

Distinguishing between the roles and purposes of the agencies they represent and roles and purposes as Project READ board members is important for coalition members. The facilitator stressed the importance of thinking of Project READ as an organization of providers trying to achieve things together that cannot be achieved individually.

Committee members developed "working definitions." "Working definitions" are ones that everyone agrees on for the moment, but are subject to revision until the planning process is completed. Working definitions were:

Clients:

> providers of programs and services promoting literacy [primarily in the adult population.] (Brackets indicate flexibility.)

Geographic area:

> [the greater Dayton area.] This definition is intended to be flexible to include underserved areas that are reasonably accessible to the Dayton area.

Mission statement:

> A coalition of literacy providers and supporters working together to improve literacy, primarily in the adult population, in the greater Dayton area.

Services that Project READ provides that enable members to do their jobs include the following:

Resource sharing.
Grant writing assistance, administration and implementation.
Referral services.
Training services.
Information services to clients.
Information services to community on behalf of clients.
Forum for addressing common concerns, issues and problems.
Advocacy to clients.

"If you don't know where
you are going,
you can get there
from any route."
-Anon

Identification of Stakeholders

Stakeholders' Characteristics:

Organized group.
Potential power to affect or be affected by an organization in a negative or positive way.

We identified stakeholders by answering the following questions:

> How do Project READ's actions and decisions potentially impact a group's interests and possibly invoke responses with the power to influence Project READ, either positively or negatively?
>
> What groups may potentially be affected by the mission and objectives of Project READ?
>
> What groups possess some interest or connection with Project READ?

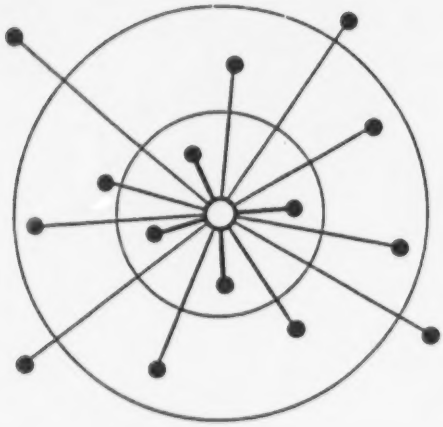
We decided that our main stakeholders are the provider agencies. Non-readers are actually the providers' stakeholders, not Project READ's. The committee decided it was important to separate client stakeholders from Project READ's stakeholders.

> Stakeholder - a person entrusted with the well-being of an organization; a vital constituent.
> -United Way of the Greater Dayton Area

Examples of Project Read Stakeholders:

> Provider organizations that are members of Project READ.
>
> Provider organizations that are currently not members.
>
> The media.
>
> Current funders of Project READ.
>
> Potential funders of project READ.
>
> Sinclair Community College (Sinclair was singled out from the other providers because the college is Project READ's host).

We agreed that Project READ has a facilitating role for organizations such as businesses, the Department of Human Services, Dayton Job Training Office and Project READ Helpline callers. These groups are considered associate or support members.



Source: George Kirk, Facilitator

Stakeholders are configured much like a constellation. In the Project READ coalition, the provider member group is the closest and strongest; other groups are more distant, and therefore weaker. The stakeholder relationship is fluid, changing through time and from issue to issue.

> Stakeholder Analysis: identify the nature of interest of each stakeholder and each stakeholder's relationship to the organization.

C. Assessing the External and Internal Environment

Factors in the external environment are those over which there is no control. By examining external factors, one can identify the opportunities and threats an organization is faced with today, and can expect to face in the future.

The planning consultant identified four areas of external influences:

1. Economic and governmental influences
   (Trends in education, legislative activities, current and future funding levels of services)

2. Sociocultural influences
   (Cultural diversity in our communities and the workplace, urbanization)

3. Technological influences
   (Computer technology)

4. Clientele and client subgroups
   (The clients of Headstart Programs, Department of Human Services, JTPA programs)

Internal factors have to do with the structure and governance of the organization. The task groups identified strengths and weaknesses in such things as board structure, staffing and programs.

Internal influences were classified in two broad areas:

1. Program, project support, facilities, and equipment
2. Finances and staffing

An analysis of the environment is best accomplished through task groups. The Planning Committee of Project READ agreed to identify people who have interest and expertise and ask these people to volunteer to serve in groups of three or four people. The executive director sent planning committee members suggestions for potential task group members.

The six groups formed were given a format to follow that included Project READ's working mission statement, interim stakeholder list, and a reporting schedule. Each group was given a carefully defined task, making sure the groups realized their task was to focus on only one sector. Groups met simultaneously over four to six weeks. The facilitator held an orientation meeting to inform the group members about their tasks.

Guidelines for the Formation of Task Group:

1. Ideally, a representative(s) from each task group will attend board meetings regularly.

2. Task groups will include people with a balance of experience and skills.

3. Task group members will indicate their first and second choices about the task groups they prefer.

4. The planning committee will use its discretion in assigning persons to task groups in order to achieve a balance of people with experiences, skills, and interests.

5. Task groups will have 3-4 members.

The facilitator provided an orientation session for all task group members. The following procedures were explained.

Procedures for Task Groups:

1. Task groups are to meet independently and according to the schedule each group arranges. Three to five work sessions are expected.

2. The consultant and members of the planning committee will be available for task group assistance as the groups work on their assignments.

3. Interaction with other task groups is encouraged. Four weeks after the orientation session, an informal gathering of members of all the groups will be held to discuss tasks. Valuable information may be gained from intra and intergroup interaction.

4. Submission of final written reports (no more than four pages) from each task group will be expected approximately six weeks after the orientation.

5. If needed, the planning committee will seek clarification or more information from the task groups.

6. The reports will be used by the planning committee to prepare recommended plans for the future.

In the initial session, task members were encouraged to brainstorm. Free thinking aids discussion by getting everything out on the table. The groups used readily available resource materials pertaining to their topic. The group studying sociocultural issues convened a panel of students to provide input. After all issues were raised, members used their own intuition and judgement to reach consensus on the issues. Members were cautioned about "paralysis of analysis."

Paralysis of analysis:
Gathering and studying
more information than
what is needed.
-Anon

Appendix H lists task group members, and Appendix I lists the specific assignments for each task group.

Task Group Reports

Timeline: April 1991 to May 1991

People Involved: Planning Committee, Coalition, and Task Groups

Each of the task groups met and prepared planning analysis reports. Condensed versions of each of the groups' reports are found in Appendix J.

Task groups shared summaries of their reports with the coalition.

D. Identifying the Strategic Issues Facing an Organization

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 1st Meeting

People Involved: Planning Committee and Facilitator

The next task for the planning committee was to sort through the compilation of task group reports to identify factors of strategic significance. A key question at this point was, "What can we anticipate in the environment that will cause us to make significant decisions about allocating resources and making decisions about program development?"

Since the reports obtained from the task groups were detailed, only those elements of greatest significance were discussed. The group agreed to make a series of assumptions or premises which could later be developed into strategies.

Premises:

Continuation and probable increase of the divergence in our society (i.e., literate and illiterate or the "haves" and the "have nots") will impact on Project READ because it will impact on the providers. Providers will need to provide more counseling services to students in the future. In-service training for tutors and teachers will be necessary to build sensitivity.

Premises continued:

Success indicators vary among the power structure (the education system and government), adult students and literacy providers. (For example, success is measured by the power structure through grade level advancement, rather than student-centered goals).

(Power structure is defined as decision makers who influence funding levels, reporting requirements and program evaluation).

We are confident and certain about what we are doing to improve literacy skills.

Application of basic approaches (phonics, whole language) are universal with providers.

Although we agree that the methodology is there, our success rate does not match our confidence.

There are many reasons known and unknown why we, as providers, are not more successful in attracting and retaining students.

The dominant source of future funding will be public funding.

If success rates do not improve, neither public or private power structures are going to increase their support of literacy efforts. If we are successful, resources will come.

Economic and social demands will place greater pressures on the under-educated.

Premises continued:

Providers as a group need to understand the importance of developing a unified "party line," a description of the view we all share. For this to happen, everyone involved has to take responsibility for it.

Providers' limitations in success are not due to lack of technology.

Technological developments will probably keep pace with or stay ahead of development of other key ingredients of success rates.

In the next five years, there will probably be an increase in the number of agencies that engage directly in providing literacy services.

Under educated adults are probably lacking a positive perception in all of the areas discussed in Dr. Kirk's "Theory on Motivation" below.

Dr. Kirk's "Theory on Motivation"

In order to be motivated one needs a positive perception about:

1. What one wants.
2. Ability to achieve what one wants.
3. Opportunity to achieve what one wants.
4. Result or outcome will be satisfying.

When there is a negative perception about any one of these four points motivation does not occur. Helping individuals develop positive perceptions about the four elements enables them to become motivated.

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 2nd and 3rd Meeting

People Involved: Planning Committee and Facilitator

The committee identified a list of options. Options were defined as things Project READ can do in response to the external and internal strategic factors that will enable Project READ to fulfill its mission and achieve its objectives.

Options:

Inform/educate funders about kinds of programs, kinds of needs, various roles of providers (including role of Project READ) and realities about costs/results/relationships in promoting literacy.

Ease the entry and progress of students into the system by being a link between students and providers, through coordination and information to students.

Facilitate among providers common perceptions and understandings that are important to their successes (advocacy forum).

Provide a forum for providers to explore their relationships and interactions (resolution forum).

Help providers and the general community have a better understanding of the differences in the kinds of programs, needs and roles of providers, including the role of the Project READ coalition.

Advocate and promote volunteering for provider agencies.

Advocate and promote programs in workplace literacy involving provider agencies.

Develop and operate an information center for: providers, funders, media, and the general public about: clients, techniques, technology, and funding.

Encourage/support collaborative efforts among interested parties.

Invite all providers and interested parties to become active in the Project READ coalition.

Establish a Project READ governance structure that will support its opportunities.

Develop a long-term financial plan which will assure Project READ's survival.

If our focus included all the above options, our strategic thrust would be too broad. The following dangers were identified:

> Outsiders may perceive too large a thrust as an attempt for Project READ to justify its existence.
>
> Coalition members need something to grasp to take back to their organizations and their boards. If the focus is too broad, it becomes more difficult to translate to the boards what the project is, what their role encompasses and their expectations will be in regard to this role.

The more narrow the thrust, the more interconnected our strategies will be. Developing sequential strategies rather than simultaneous strategies also narrows the focus.

The committee's consensus was to develop a narrow thrust. For a description of strategic thrust, please see page 14.

PROJECT READ MEETING

People Involved: Coalition and Facilitator

The planning committee presented the twelve premises to the board. The premises were discussed and approved.

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 4th Meeting

People Involved: Committee and Facilitator

A draft document was prepared by the facilitator, from notes taken from the planning committee meetings and coalition meetings.

Results from Draft Discussion:

Internal Influences

The committee thought a weakness of the organization was services since Project READ is a relatively young organization and the development of programs and services has been limited. However, the fact that the organization is young was also considered a strength. The organization does not have a history of tradition to overcome in order to implement plans.

Strategic Directions

Three basic strategic directions were identified:

1) growth, 2) stability, and 3) retrenchment

Of these, growth was identified as Project READ's strategic direction. Four growth strategies were suggested:

1. Emphasize efforts to gain a common understanding among READ organizations about issues and problems and ways of dealing with the problems.

2. Take a leadership role in informing the power structure about literacy issues, roles of providers, etc.

3. Put additional effort into establishing the coalition's financial base.

4. Put considerable effort into identifying services to membership.

Project READ should communicate the tangible benefits of membership to keep members involved and active. This is strategically important since it could contribute to the decline or demise of the organization. Before identifying benefits, a greater understanding and unity among members must be achieved, including an enhanced understanding of their interdependence.

Project READ members' expectations had not been discussed. What did they expect to get from their affiliation? What are they able to share with other members? The planning committee decided the facilitator would present background information and request that each member complete a survey on what they have to offer and what they expect to receive.

We realized we didn't have a good understanding of the benefits members expected from the coalition. We decided to do a brief survey, conducted at our monthly coalition meeting.

E. Formulating Strategies to Manage the Issues

PROJECT READ MEETING

People Involved: Coalition and Facilitator

The facilitator reported on the planning committee's progress, including goals. Members were asked to list specific actions that will enable Project READ to reach goals. These actions were discussed at a planning retreat on November 16, 1991. A "Looking Ahead" survey was distributed. It solicited ideas from members concerning the benefits they would like to receive and share.

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 5th Meeting

People Involved: Committee

The committee used Coalition members' input (from the September 27, 1991 meeting) to revise the strategic directions in the strategic planning document. The committee members also reviewed the "Looking Ahead" survey tabulation.

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 6th Meeting

People Involved: Committee

During this meeting the committee revised the general objectives of the plan. Three strategic directions were decided upon:

1. Advocacy and awareness.

2. Supportive services to member agencies.

3. Governance and structure.

PROJECT READ PLANNING RETREAT

People Involved: Coalition and Facilitator

The purpose of the retreat was to wrap up the planning process and prioritize our objectives. The attendees used the nominal group process to identify the supportive services that Project READ can start or continue for its members in the next two or three years.

Planning retreat participants did the following:

Identified services from the draft of the plan as well as a new list of services. Fourty-four services were presented.

Consolidated services and items that were more appropriate in the other two categories. 1) Advocacy and Awareness, and 2) Governance and Structure.

Prioritized the remaining list of twenty-five items. The services with the highest aggregate scores were determined to be the highest priorities.

Discussed governance and structure issues. They agreed that time should be devoted to further examination of governance and structure issues.

Time ran out before awareness and advocacy issues could be addressed. The group agreed that at the Project READ Coalition meeting in January, 1992 they would use the nominal group process to prioritize awareness and advocacy issues.

PROJECT READ MEETING

People Involved: Coalition

Coalition members continued work started at the planning retreat November 16, 1991. They prioritized the awareness and advocacy issues using the nominal group process.

PLANNING COMMITTEE - 7th Meeting

People Involved: Committee and Facilitator

The committee discussed creating an action plan, based on the objectives in the planning document. The purpose of the action plan is to break down the objectives into small, manageable pieces. Each action step has a specific timeframe and person(s) responsible for carrying it out.

Committee members prioritized their activities and identified activities that could be accomplished with volunteer assistance. New committees, such as information development, might need to be created to handle specific tasks.

PROJECT READ MEETING

People Involved: Coalition and Facilitator

The facilitator and planning committee presented a final draft of the strategic plan. The plan was approved. The executive director distributed a draft of an action plan based on the objectives of the strategic plan. The action plan lists measurable action steps, timelines and staff/committee responsibility. During the month of February, committees met to finalize their individual action plans. Project READ's strategic plan can be found in Appendix K.

F. Establishing a Vision for the Future

The planning process helped us confirm some old beliefs and enlightened us regarding new beliefs.

It confirmed an earlier decision that the coalition must exist to advance the efforts of literacy providers. The relationship among coalition members is strong because it serves a meaningful purpose for the providers. The literacy providers will remain at the helm of the coalition.

It confirmed our belief that Project READ will remain a small organization, employing two staff people. It will remain in its coordinating and supporting role rather than enter into direct service.

Planning has strengthened an understanding among members. We realize that our future success is found in our common concern of literacy. We can accomplish goals together we cannot accomplish as individual organizations.

Joint planning activities have reminded us that cooperation cannot be forced. The individual personalities of the people involved are the key element to our success.

It helped us recognize the complex roles and expectations among organizations. There is a new realization that members must support all coalition activities, not just those that benefit them.

It gave us new insights about what an effective coalition is and what we need to do to maintain it.

We now have new program ideas. Implementation of these new ideas will enhance the collective powers of members without losing our individuality.

Planning has taught us that it's the benefits of membership that keep members involved. Part of the coalition's future work will be to help member organization's gain all the benefits they perceive they can gain.

IV. APPENDIX

A. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bryson, John M., Strategic Planning for Public and Non-Profit Organizations, Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1989.

David, Fred R., Concepts of Strategic Management, 3rd ed., Merrill Publishing Co., Columbus, Ohio.

Hostager, T.J. and Bryson, J.M., "Politics and Strategic Management," Discussion Paper No. 59, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Strategic Management Research Center, 1986

Smith, Arnold, Bizzell, Business Strategy and Policy, 3rd ed., Houchton Mifflin Co., Boston.

B. PROJECT READ COALITION MEMBERS
May 1992

Academics for Employment/Jewish Vocational Services	Mr. Buster Newton
Central State University, Center for Study of Urban Literacy	Dr. Jerrie Scott/ Mr. Lloyd Haynes
Dayton Public Schools, Adult and Continuing Education	Mr. John Maxwell
Dayton Public Schools, Adult Basic Education	Mayor Richard Clay Dixon
Dayton Public Schools, Family Life Education	Ms. Christine Alexander
Dayton and Montgomery County Library	Mr. Mark Willis/
English Language and Multi-Cultural Institute	Ms. Clara Escalon Delgado
Family Service Association	Ms. Dolores Hopson
Goodwill Industries	Mr. William Jesse/ Mr. Kevin Foley
Greater Dayton Job Training Office	Mr. William Gerhardt
Kettering Adult School	Mr. Dan Fowler
Kettering Adult School - English as a Second Language	Ms. Mary Lou Cole
Miami Valley Literacy Council	Ms. Desiree Nickrell
Miami-Jacobs College	Mr. Charles Campbell
Mon-Day Community Correctional Institution	Ms. Julie Geis Edsal
Montgomery County Community Action Agency, Headstart Program	Ms. Beverly Conley/ Ms. Carolyn Harkleroad
Montgomery County Community Human Services	Mr. Roland Winburn

Montgomery County Department of Human Services, INVEST	Mr. Walt Cero
Montgomery County Joint Vocational School, Adult Basic Education	Ms. Amy Leedy
Montgomery County Schools, Youth Employment Program	Ms. Bev Broestl
Preble County Literacy Coalition	Ms. Judy Blackburn
Sinclair Community College, Developmental Studies	Ms. Susan L'Heureux
United Way of the Greater Dayton Area, Literacy Program	Dr. Laurie Fox/ Ms. Nancy Shiffer
University of Dayton, Learning Assistance Center	Mr. James Melko
WDTN TV Channel 2	Mr. Ray Colie
WPTD TV Channel 16	Mr. Mike Jarvis
Wright State University, Center for Labor and Management Coop.	Ms. Melissa Van
Wright State University, Developmental Education	Mr. Dave Hurwitz

Project READ Officers

President, Mark Willis
Vice President, Ray Colie
Secretary, Mary Lou Cole
Treasurer, Amy Leedy

Project READ Staff

Karla Hibbert-Jones, Executive Director
Rosalind Bertolo, Administrative Assistant/Helpline Specialist

C. PROJECT READ PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS
May 1992

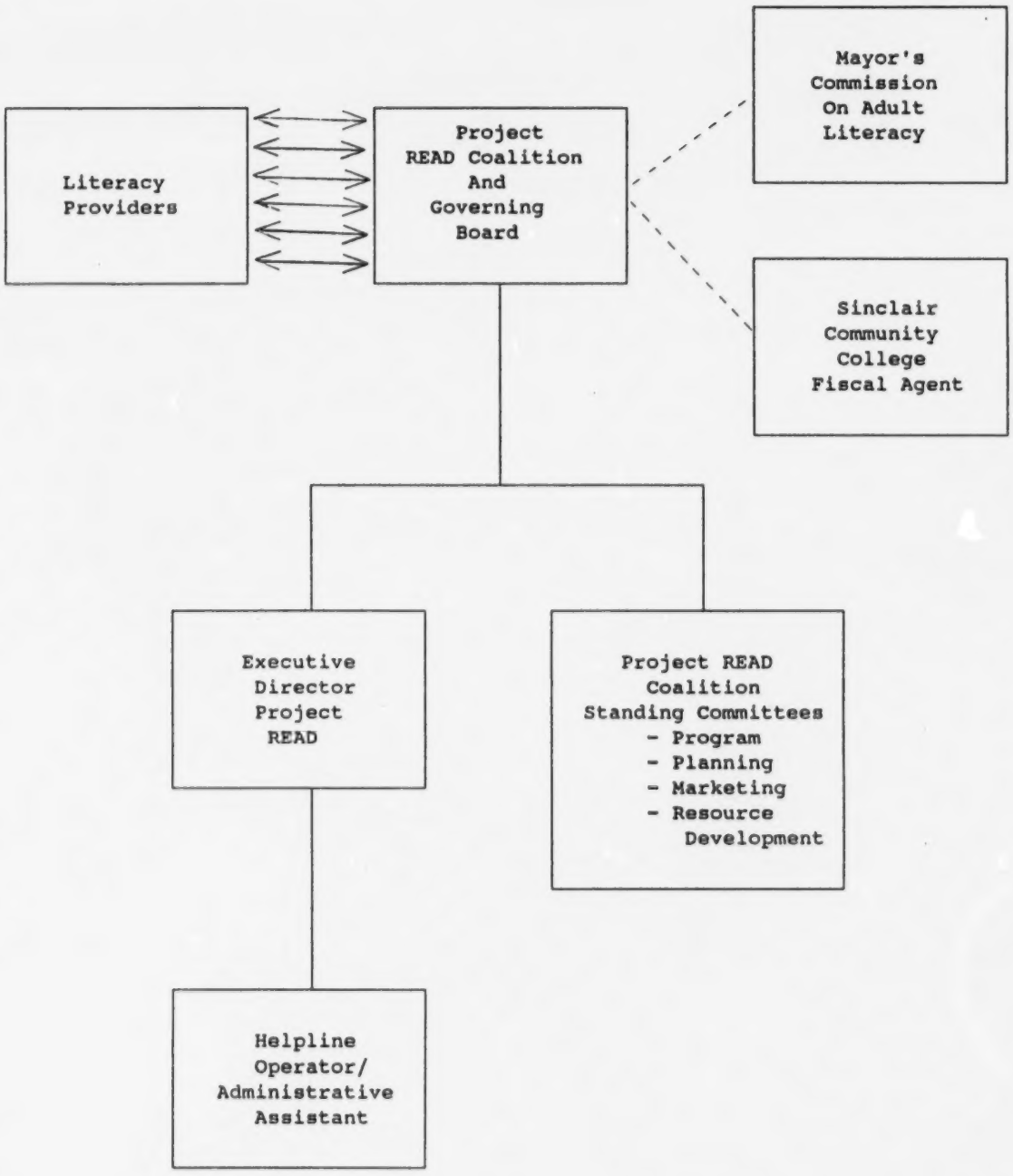
Academics For Employment/Jewish Vocational Services	Mr. Buster Newton
Central State University, Center for Study of Urban Literacy	Dr. Jerrie Scott
Dayton Public Schools, Family Life Education	Ms. Christine Alexander
Dayton and Montgomery County Public Library	Mr. Mark Willis
Montgomery County Joint Vocational School	Ms. Amy Leedy
United Way of the Dayton Area, Literacy Project	Dr. Laurie Fox
WDTN-TV Channel 2	Mr. Ray Colie, Chair
Management Consultant/Facilitator	Dr. George Kirk
Ex-officio Member (Executive Director of Project READ)	Karla Hibbert-Jones

D. ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THIS PROJECT
May 1992

(STATE DEMONSTRATION GRANT)

Dayton Public Schools, Family Life Education	Ms. Christine Alexander
Dayton and Montgomery County Public Library	Mr. Mark Willis, Chair
Greater Dayton Job Training Office	Mr. William Gerhardt
Kettering Adult School, Adult Basic Education	Mr. Dan Fowler
Miami Valley Literacy Council	Ms. Deb O'Donnell
Montgomery County Department of Human Services, INVEST	Mr. Walt Cero
Montgomery County Joint Vocational School	Ms. Amy Leedy
Ohio Department of Education	Ms. Connie Ackerman/ Mr. David Smith

E. Project READ Table of Organization



5/92

F.

A SAMPLE OF OHIO LITERACY COALITIONS

Coalition	Area Served	Number of Providers	Board Composition	Membership	Funding Sources	Origin	Services
Greater Cleveland Literacy Coalition	Cuyahoga County	70; youth & adults providers	50 Board Members: literacy providers, religious groups,	None	Foundations, corporations, individuals.	Communications Skills Study Group	Hotline, 200/mo tutor & student recruitment.
Greater Cincinnati Literacy Network	Hamilton, Butler, Clermont Warren & Northern Kentucky Counties of Campbell, Boone & Kenton & Indiana Co. Deerborn	70+	23 Board Members: literacy providers, corporations, colleges, county & city officials, religious groups, & students.	60 Members	Corporations, fund-raising by board, United Way foundations, grants	Project Literacy U.S.	Est. 1986, hotline, newsletter, tutor & student recruitment, referral, training, network public awareness
Literacy Initiative of Central Ohio (Columbus)	Franklin County & several others in central OH	60	24 Board Members: literacy providers, corporations, state and city officials, colleges, T.V., newspapers, students volunteers, human services and religious groups.	60 Members United for Adult Literacy	City of Columbus, fund-raising by board, grants & corporations.	United For Adult Literacy & Mayor's Commission	Hotline, 200/mo newsletter aimed at employers beginning to develop assessment center, tutor & student recruitment.

Appendix F (cont.)

Coalition	Served	Providers	Board Composition	Membership	Funding Sources	Origin	Services
Preble County Literacy Coalition	Preble County	3	75 Board Members: Mayor, businesses, library, United Way, human services, literacy providers, and other educators.	50+ Members	Grant, Businesses, sorority	Delta Kappa Gamma Sorority	Hotline 10/mo. tutor & student recruitment, tutor training, placement & monitoring.
Clark County Literacy Coalition	Clark County	4	13 Board Members: library, ABE, job training prov., Clark State,United Way, Chamber of Commerce, newspaper, ctrl purchasing of Laubach materials.	13 Members (7 of which are Board Members)	LSCA, Grant	Coalition Members	Newsletter, tutor & student recruitment, hotline, tutor training, placement & monitoring parent/child book clubs, workplace programs, tutor student support groups & book club

Prepared by Project READ 1/91

G. CHALLENGES FACED BY ALL COALITIONS

To varying degrees, all coalitions face challenges including inadequate funding, an unclear perception in the community about the role of the coalition, and competition among providers.

Interestingly, a key factor in competition among providers is due to the complications arising from the increase in the number of organizations involved in literacy service delivery. Joining school systems are businesses, unions, social service agencies, government, correctional institutions, churches and civic organizations. Most literacy practitioners welcome assistance. However, joining forces creates the primary challenge to literacy coalitions: how do adult basic education and literacy councils coordinate their activities with a number of diverse organizations to develop and implement an effective, efficient, compatible community plan?

In response to this challenge, multisector coalitions have formed, or are forming, across Ohio and the Nation. Multisector collaboration is defined by United Way of America as:

> "... voluntary, strategic association of public, private and nonprofit organizations to enhance each other's capacities to achieve a common purpose by sharing risk, responsibilities and rewards."

Despite the apparent need for multisector collaboration, it is not an easy, fast solution. The consensus building work of coalitions can be slow and tedious. Due to the nature of coalitions, there is a tendency to react to the present instead of consciously and proactively planning for the future. Coalition members benefit by engaging in joint strategic planning because they develop a common vision of the literacy services they are collectively called upon to deliver. This collective vision is larger than individual organizational visions. A shared vision that includes strategic action plans enables members to take advantage of opportunities and successfully meet challenges.

Communities and individuals benefit in a variety of ways from multi-sector collaborations. Effective coalitions in rural and urban communities increase public awareness of the impact of illiteracy, mobilize resources and improve the design and delivery of literacy services.

H. TASK GROUP MEMBERS

PROGRAMS/PROGRAM SUPPORT/FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Mr. Charles Campbell
President
Miami-Jacobs College

Ms. Joan Pierce
Literacy Coordinator
Goodwill Industries

Ms. Sue Polzella
Director
Adult Basic Education
Kettering Adult School

Mr. John Maxwell, Jr.
Supervisor, Adult & Cont. Ed.
Dayton Public Schools

Ms. Sue Steinke
Reference Librarian
Dayton and Montgomery Co.
Library

FINANCING AND STAFFING

Ms. Bev Broestl
Director
Youth Employment Services
Montgomery County
Education Services Center

Ms. Mary Lou Cole
ESL Instructor
Kettering Adult School

Ms. Kathryn Strawn
Administrative Officer
The Mead Corporation

Ms. Janet Henry
Senior Program Officer
The Dayton Foundation

Ms. Nancy Shiffer
Group Vice President
CAR Council/United Way

ECONOMIC AND GOVERNMENTAL INFLUENCES

Dr. Lee Grafton
Research Manager
Dayton Area Chamber of
Commerce

Ms. Brenda King
Director of Social Services
Montgomery County Department
of Human Services

Mr. Jim Melko
Director
Learning Assistance Center
University of Dayton

Ms. Melissa Van
Special Project Coordinator
Center for Labor and Coop.
Management
Wright State University

CLIENTELE SUBGROUPS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUPS

Mr. Walt Cero
IN-VEST Supervisor
Montgomery County Department
Human Services

Mr. William Gerhardt
Client Systems Manager
Greater Dayton Job
Training Office

Ms. Darlene Waite
Educational Contract Counselor
Miami Jacobs College

Mr. Roland Winburn
Program Coordinator
Montgomery County Community
Human Services

SOCIO-CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Ms. Linda Bales
Human Services Planner
Miami Valley Regional Planning
Commission

Ms. Clara Escalon Delgado
Director
English Language and
Multi-cultural Institute

Ms. Julie Geis Edsal
Education Coordinator
Mon-Day Community Institution

Mr. Lloyd Haynes
Administration Coord/Researcher
Center for Study of Urban Lit.
Central State University

Ms. Desiree Nickell
Executive Director
Miami Valley Literacy Council

TECHNOLOGICAL INFLUENCES

Ms. Lelia Austin
Promotions Department
Dayton Daily News, Inc.

Mr. Dan Fowler
Director
Kettering Adult School

Ms. Susan L'Heureux
Professor
Development Studies
Sinclair Community College

Mr. Dave Hurwitz
Assistant Director
Developmental Education
Wright State University

I. TASK GROUP ASSIGNMENTS*

ECONOMIC AND GOVERNMENTAL INFLUENCES

Examine Project READ's external situation with specific concerns about:

A. Economic Influences

1. Identify the economic factors that may have the greatest positive or negative influences on Project READ's ability to serve its clientele.

2. Describe how those influences affect Project READ and its clientele.

B. Governmental Influences

1. Identify the kinds of actions that my be anticipated of federal, state or local governments that will have positive or negative influences on Project READ's ability to serve its clientele.

2. Describe how those influences affect Project READ and its clientele.

BRIEFINGS AND GUIDANCE will be provided by the consultant who is working with board and the planning committee.

INTERACTION with other Project READ task groups is encouraged. Example: what will be the financial impacts of state financed programs on the number of provider agencies that can receive funding, and how will that influence the ways that Project READ will serve the provider agencies?

A REPORT by this task group is to be submitted to the planning committee. The report should be more than four pages and should contain a summary of the study items, A. and B. above. This report will be used by the planning committee, along with reports from other task groups, to prepare recommended plans for the future.

*The Task Group Assignment materials in Attachment I were developed by the facilitator George Kirk.

SOCIO-CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Examine Project READ's external situation with specific concerns about:

A. Sociological Changes

1. Identify changes that can be anticipated in the future composition of Project READ's clientele base.

2. Identify how the characteristics of the future clientele base will differ from the present base, for example, interests, needs, values, desires, tastes, etc., that may influence the way Project READ's clientele (providers) may relate to Project READ.

3. Identify the kinds of implications sociological changes will have on the kinds of programs Project READ will provide to its clientele (providers) in the future.

BRIEFINGS AND GUIDANCE will be provided by the consultant who is working with the board and the planning committee.

INTERACTION with other Project READ task groups is encouraged. EXAMPLE: what will be the technological impact of personal computers on the way provider agencies combat illiteracy, and how will those technologies respond to or stimulate social attitudes toward the eradication of illiteracy?

A REPORT by this task group is to be submitted to the planning committee. It should be no more than four pages and should contain a summary of items A.; 1., 2. and 3. above. This report will be used by the planning committee along with reports from four other task groups to prepare recommended plans for the future.

TECHNOLOGICAL INFLUENCES

Examine Project READ's external situation with specific concerns about:

A. Technological Changes

1. Identify changes that can be anticipated because of advancing technologies that could have a positive or negative effect on Project READ's ability to serve its clientele in the future. (Note: changes may have a direct effect on clientele (providers) or on groups of clientele of the providers, or they may have a direct effect on Project READ as an organization.

2. Describe how technological changes may influence the kind of programs Project READ would offer its clientele (providers), or the way that Project READ may design or deliver its programs to its clientele.

BRIEFINGS AND GUIDANCE will be provided by the consultant who is working with the board and planning committee.

INTERACTION with other Project READ groups is encouraged. EXAMPLE: what will be the technological impact of personal computers on the way provider agencies combat illiteracy, and how will those technologies respond to or stimulate social attitudes toward the eradication of illiteracy?

A REPORT by this task group is to be submitted to the planning committee. It should be no more than four pages and should contain a SUMMARY of items A.; 1. and 2. above. This report will be used by the planning committee along with reports from four other task groups to prepared recommended plans for the future.

PROGRAMS/PROGRAM SUPPORT/FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Examine Project READ's internal situation with specific concerns about:

A. Present Program Status
   1. Assess the present strengths of programs.
   2. Assess the present weaknesses of programs.
   3. Assess the relative cost of programs as related to the benefits, results or outcomes.
   4. Classify programs as they may be considered essential to the central mission and goals of Project READ, or may be considered complementary.

B. Future Program Status
   1. Assess the probability of various programs being strong or weak in the future.
   2. Assess the relative costs of programs in the future as related to benefits, results or outcomes.
   3. Identify what will be needed to provide offsets or elimination of weaknesses in the future of programs that are considered essential to the central mission and goals.
   4. Identify ways to build upon the present strengths of programs for greater success and assurances of their continuation.

C. Physical Resources
   1. Identify and describe the various aspect of the physical resources presently available to Project READ.
      (Note: this includes the buildings, other general categories of equipment, etc.)
   2. Identify in general terms the purposes and the extent to which various kinds of physical resources are being used in the present operation.
   3. Identify in general terms what may be anticipated in the need for additional physical resources in the future.

BRIEFINGS AND GUIDANCE will be provided by the consultant who is working with the board and the planning committee.

INTERACTION with other Project READ task groups is encouraged.

A REPORT by this task group is to be submitted to the planning committee. It should be no more than four pages and should contain a SUMMARY of items A., B. and C. above. This report will be used by the planning committee along with reports from other task groups to prepare recommended plans for the future.

FINANCING AND STAFFING

Examine Project READ's internal situation with specific concerns about:

A. Financial Status of Project READ
   1. For the current fiscal year identify Project READ's various sources of revenue and show each source as a percentage or proportion of the total.
   2. Identify the various uses or planned uses (budget) of financial resources for the current fiscal year, and show what percentage or proportion of the total is allocated to the various uses.
   3. Identify the kinds of uses that will probably require an unavoidable increase in allocation in the future.
   4. Identify probable ways Project READ will experience loses or revenue sources in the future.
   5. Identify potential ways Project READ could develop new or different sources in the future.

B. Human Resources Status of Project READ
   (NOTE: THIS ANALYSIS IS NOT TO ASSESS THE PERFORMANCE OF PERSONS IN THEIR PRESENT POSITIONS. IT IS TO IDENTIFY THE KINDS OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS PROJECT READ HAS AND WILL NEED.)

   1. Identify various human resources presently available and serving Project READ. (Note: this includes all STAFF and VOLUNTEERS who help carry-out the work of Project READ.)
   2. Identify where there is sufficiency and insufficiency of staff and volunteers to support the present operation.
   3. Identify the kinds of human resources -- staff and volunteers -- that will be needed or would be desired in the future.

BRIEFINGS AND GUIDANCE will be provided by the consultant who is working with the board and the planning committee.

INTERACTION with other Project READ task groups is encouraged.

A REPORT by this task group is to be submitted to the planning committee. It should be no more than four pages and should contain a SUMMARY of items A. and B. above. This report will be used by the planning committee along with reports from other task groups, to prepare recommended plans for the future.

CLIENTELE SUBGROUPS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTED GROUPS

Examine Project READ's external and internal situation with specific concern about:

A. Present Clientele Subgroups
   1. Identify the distinctive subgroupings presently recognized and served through existing programs.
   2. Identify additional subgroups within the present (potential) client base, which could be served with programs not presently offered by Project READ.

B. Future Clientele Subgroups
   1. Identify potential subgroups which may exist in the future, or may be markedly different than today's subgroups.
   2. Identify the kinds of new or different programs which could serve the particular interests of future subgroups.

C. Present Community Support Groups
   1. Identify the community services support groups that presently provide direct support to Project READ programs or are coordinated with Project READ programs.
   2. Describe how each of those support groups interface with one or more Project READ programs.

D. Future Community Services Support Groups
   1. Identify community services, both public and private that may be potential support groups for Project READ in the future.
   2. Describe how each of those support services could interface with one or more Project READ programs in the future.

BRIEFINGS AND GUIDANCE will be provided by the consultant who is working with the board and the planning committee.

INTERACTION with other Project READ task groups is encouraged. EXAMPLE: what will be the technological impact of personal computers on Project READ in the 1990's, and what implications do they have on potential client subgroups which may have programs developed around the use of personal computers?

A REPORT by this task group is to be submitted to the planning committee. It should be no more than four pages and should contain a summary of items A., B., C. and D. above. This report will be used by the planning committee, along with other task groups, to prepare recommended plans for the future.

J. SUMMARIES OF TASK GROUP REPORTS

Economic and Governmental Influences Task Force

Primary economic influences include demographic trends and businesses needs for increased employee training in basic skills. A greater proportion of the future U.S. workforce will consist of minorities.

Governmental influences include marketing Project READ so that the organization is positioned to maximize awareness among public officials and a competitive edge for grant funding opportunities. Governmental funding influences include increased competition, including funding competition from outside the region and uncertainty in future governmental budgets that affect Project READ organizations. Other governmental influences include changes in public schools and higher education, with more emphasis on developmental education.

Programs, Program Support, Facilities and Equipment Task Force

Project READ's greatest program strengths are the monthly meetings and referral services, provided primarily through the Helpline. Facilitating and collaborating activities among members are good and improving. Project READ's greatest weakness is its lack of identity or visibility, and therefore marketing needs to be refined and enhanced. Project READ needs a coordinated marketing plan.

Financing and Staffing Task Force

Project READ should pursue local, state and national funding by applying for grants more aggressively. It should also consider increasing contributions by member agencies. The Dayton Mayor's Commission on Literacy might provide help with resource development and marketing, as well as legislative advocacy.

Technological Influences Task Force

Technology will transform the way basic skills are taught. Higher reading levels will be needed as industry upgrades technology. Project READ can interlink providers by modem. Providing inservice workshops or conferences is a good role for the coalition.

Socio/Cultural Influences Task Force

Adults lacking basic skills require services which include increased publicity on the availability of literacy programs, culturally diverse publicity designed to increase involvement in literacy programs of all ethnic groups, child care for students and training for tutors to enable them to be sensitive to other cultural groups.

Clientele Sub-groups and Community Support Groups Task Force

Clientele sub-groups currently receiving literacy services were identified. Additional sub-groups within the potential client base who are not currently being served were identified, as well as future sub-groups who will need literacy services. The following programs were identified as those which might serve the needs of future sub-groups: workplace literacy, dislocated worker, learning disabled, and cultural sub-groups. The community services support groups that provide support to Project READ programs were identified.

K. Project READ's Strategic Plan

P R O J E C T R E A D

A Coalition

Dedicated to Literacy

for All Adults

in the

Greater Dayton Area

LOOKING AHEAD:

PROJECT READ'S FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

This document represents PROJECT READ's vision of its future and the programs it can develop to help promote literacy.

Coalition is defined as
a combination or a union;
an alliance of factions united
for some specific purpose.

I. PHILOSOPHY

Project READ believes that a common concern for literacy is the bonding agent for its existence.

Project READ believes it is an organization of providers working to achieve things together that they cannot achieve themselves individually.

Project READ believes that as a coalition of agencies, member agencies may complement their individual programs and have a greater total influence on literacy through the collective efforts of the coalition.

Project READ believes there are numerous stakeholders in the community that have an interest in the programs and activities of the coalition, and it gives consideration to those interests in the development and execution of its programs.

II. MISSION

PROJECT READ IS A COALITION OF LITERACY PROVIDERS AND SUPPORTERS WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE LITERACY, PRIMARILY IN THE ADULT POPULATION, IN THE GREATER DAYTON AREA.

Project READ identifies its clientele as member agencies of the coalition that provide literacy programs and services or promote literacy, and other interested agencies that are associated with the coalition.

III. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Project READ has chosen the following strategies to give direction to its long-term efforts to serve its clientele and fulfill its mission.

* Advocacy and Awareness
* Supportive Services to Member Agencies
* Governance and Structure

IV. GENERAL OBJECTIVES

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

1. Continue networking and supporting each other by functioning as a facilitating agency, bringing together the interests and needs of the community and literacy providers for the mutual benefit of both.

2. Operate the Project READ Helpline.

3. Develop resources to support the coalition and member organizations.

4. Act as a resource clearinghouse for literacy information.

5. Publicize existing training opportunities and provide training opportunities.

6. Identify and develop new programs to "fill the gaps," including the needs of special need populations (such as workplace literacy, family literacy, and persons with learning disabilities).

ADVOCACY/AWARENESS

1. Develop a marketing plan to broaden visibility of literacy providers and literacy issues in the community.

2. Promote the Project READ Helpline as a source of information and referral for all segments of the community.

3. Take a leadership role in disseminating information about:

    * the diversity of programs
    * the kinds of needs and options to meet those needs
    * various roles of literacy providers
    * realities about results and costs
    * the value of literacy coordination

4. Create a public awareness of Project READ's role in the community as a contact point where persons may turn when they have questions about literacy.

5. Support and advocate for legislation beneficial to advancing literacy efforts.

6. Inform providers and other concerned parties about state and national legislation that will affect local literacy efforts.

GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

1. Develop and implement a plan and a structure that is appropriate for the organization's mission, goals and service programs.

2. Develop and implement a plan for financial stability which will respect the interests of member literacy providers.

V. Rationale

A. Stakeholders

Some of Project READ's primary stakeholder groups are:*

Provider organizations of Project READ
Provider organizations that are not members of Project READ
The Media
Current funders of Project READ
Current funders of Project READ member agencies
Current funders of agencies that are potential members of Project Read
Potential funders of Project READ
Sinclair Community College (as host organization)
Project READ Helpline callers
Businesses
Department of Human Services
Dayton Job Training Office

* This is a representative list, and not intended as exhaustive. The stakeholder relationship is a fluid one, which changes through time and from issue to issue.

B. External Influences

Project READ has identified major factors in its external environment which have or may potentially have a significant influence on what it may do to serve its clientele and fulfill its mission. Assumptions about the nature and extent of those influences in the future serve as premises used by Project READ in planning its strategies and programs.

> Continuation and probable increase of the divergence in our society will impact on Project READ because it will impact on the providers.

The divergence exists in the forms of "literate and illiterate" and the "haves and have nots".

Economic and social demands will place greater pressures on the under-educated.

Many under-educated persons may lack motivation to seek help and remain in literacy programs. A valuable service of provider agencies is to help individuals become motivated to do what is needed to become literate.

Success indicators vary among (1) the power strsuctures that are critical to program success, i. e., education systems and various levels of government agencies, (2) adult students, and (3) literacy providers.

Provider agencies are confident and certain about present methods to improve literacy skills and continuing progress is being made in improving methodologies. The application of basic approaches is universal with providers. However, success rates do not match the confidence. There are many reasons known and unknown why providers are not more successful in attracting and retaining students.

The dominant source of future funding to improve literacy skills will be public funding.

Because of different perceptions between the power structure and provider agencies of how to measure success, providers are disadvantaged in obtaining appropriate funding from the power structure. If success rates do not improve to demonstrate the value of methods used by providers, neither public or private power structures will increase their support of literacy efforts. If success rates improve, funding will likely increase.

Future funding for literacy programs will be more certain and more adequate if there is a unified view by providers as a group on such issues as need, benefits, methodologies, technologies, levels and measures of success and other critical factors in increasing the literacy levels of adults.

Lack of unity among provider agencies complicates the problem of perceptions and misunderstandings about such issues as program goals, methods of training and success rates, especially to the power structures that are funding programs.

In the next five years, there will probably be an increase in the numbers of agencies that engage directly in providing literacy services.

New literacy programs are more likely to be developed to serve the needs of the organizations developing them than to meet a need that is not being addressed by an existing program. If those programs are only an incidental part of the organizations work and if the funding of the programs is temporary, they are unlikely to have any long-term impact on increasing the literacy levels of adults.

Technological developments that support literacy training will probably keep pace with or stay ahead of the development of other key ingredients of success rates.

Limitations in provider's success rates are not due to a lack of technology as part of the methodology of teaching literacy. Other key ingredients to success rates which may be more limiting are such things as understanding why potential clientele do not use existing programs and why some who do start programs may unexplainable drop-out.

C. Internal Influences

Project READ has identified major factors in its internal situation which have or may potentially have a significant influence on what it may do to serve its clientele and fulfill its mission. Assumptions about the nature and extent of those influences in the future served as premises used by Project READ in planning its strategies and programs.

Financing is presently a weakness for Project READ because it has not established a basic financial structure that is continuous and reliable. Its financing to date has been on a temporary, interim basis from sources that are not likely to continue in the long-run. Without a more definite financing plan, the organization will have a difficult and threatened existence.

Staffing is considered a strength for the present. While staffing is limited, it is adequate for present programs and activities. Staffing needs for the long-run cannot be determined until the organizations long-term plans are in place

Services to clients are very limited but appropriate for the present time. This can be viewed as a strength in the short-run because there is no need to delete services, and the selection of services to be instituted is not limited by an existing service structure.

Promotion and development has been one of the main thrusts of the organization since its inception, and could be viewed as a strength. Its efforts to gain identity in the community and establish itself as a viable community agency have made good progress and hold good potential for growth.

Facilities for the organization are limited and are provided by Sinclair Community College at no cost to Project READ. At present, this can be viewed as a strength. There is an avoidance of facility maintenance expense, and Project READ receives substantial in-kind support from its host agency.

OTHER ISSUES

The following ideas are important considerations that are at this time a lower priority time than the previously mentioned objectives:

Write and distribute promotional materials for member organizations

Provide program evaluation

Provide assessments of students

Identify barriers for learners

Identify new providers

Provide support for youth programs

Summarize research and techniques

Share purchasing power

Advocate to grantmakers the need for accountability in literacy programs driven by individual learner's needs

APPENDIX I

Project READ's planning model and process
Task group topics and membership
Task group reports

APPENDIX II

Notes from the various planning sessions

APPENDIX III

Documents on a Governance Plan and Structure

L. RESOURCE LIST

Askov, Eunice N. and Sherow, Shelia, "Building Coalitions in Adult Literacy." Adult Learning, Vol. 1, No. 5, Feb. 1991.

Burner, Charles, "Thinking Collaboratively: Ten Questions and Answers to Help Policy Makers Improve Children's Services," Washington, DC: Education and Human Services Consortium, 1991.

Bryson, John M., Strategic Planning for Public and Non-Profit Organizations, Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1989.

Crandall, Joann and Imel, Susan, "Issues in Adult Literacy Education." The ERIC Review, Vol. 1, Issue 2, April 1991, pps. 2-7.

Ellis, Susan J., "Barter and Collaboration: Expanding our Horizons." The Journal of Volunteer Adminstration, Spring 1983, pp. 43-49.

Hardaker, Maurice and Ward, Bryan, K., "Getting Things Done: How to Make a Team Work." Harvard Business Review, November-December 1987, pp. 112-118.

Himmelman, Arthur, T., "Literacy Kit: Communities Working Collaboratively for a Change." United Way of America, 1990.

Independent Community Consultants, Inc., The Nonprofit Board Book, Strategies for Organizations Success, 1985